

9/15/99

To whom it may concern,

4586 '99 SEP 21 AIO:21

Regarding Docket numbers 98N-1230, 96P-0418 and 97P-0197:

Each year the US egg industry deliberately denies food and water to battery hens for up to *two weeks* to manipulate egg production. Starvation makes them lose their feathers-forcing one last cycle of eggs from their dying bodies.

Forced molting is so stressful it destroys the hens' immune system which makes them contract salmonella. Even the USDA admitted that "public health concerns are raised by highly stressful forced molting. Extended starvation and water deprivation leads to increased salmonella enteritidis by laying hens." Many human egg-borne diseases and deaths are caused by contaminated eggs.

It is immoral to subject helpless birds to such torture. Hens live their entire lives in tiny cages and suffer horribly. They cant walk, stretch or move while forced to lay eggs until they die of exhaustion. Would you treat your pets this way?

Remember the "tiger cages" the Viet Cong used to torture American soldiers? The cage was built to prevent soldiers from lying down or standing up. As we treat animals, we treat ourselves.

" The question is *not* 'Can they reason?' nor 'Can they talk?' The question is, '*Can They Suffer?*'" said philosopher Jeremy Bentham over two hundred years ago!

The FDA must forbid forced molting. Cruelty and contamination are linked.

Thank you

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96P-0418

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HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
FOOD AND DRUG ADMINISTRATION
CROSS REFERENCE SHEET

Docket Number/Item Code: 98N-1230/C655

See Docket Number/Item Code: 97P-0197/C656
96P-0418/C655